Model Container Handling—facility at Madras Port

900. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposals are afoot to develop the Madras Port into a model container handling facility; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) At present the Madras Port has a 600 metre long container terminal with a rated handling capacity of 2.10 lakhs TEUs per annum. To cater to the continuing increase in container traffic, there is a proposal to extend the existing terminal by a further 290 metres towards north. On completion of this extension, the Madras Port Trust container terminal will have a rated capacity of 4.72 lakhs TEUs per annum.

Vishakhapatnam Port Trust

901. SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated a plan to develop Vishakhapatnam Port Trust;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the amount to be spent thereon?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Various plan schemes have been envisaged to develop and modernise the infrastructural facilities of Vishakhapatnam port during the Ninth Plan (1997—2002) with a proposed total outlay of Rs. 850 crores for the Ninth Plan and an Annual Plan outlay of Rs. 70.50 crores for 1997-98.

Shipping Corporation Swindled by Egyptian Contractor

902. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Shipping Corporation of India has been swindled by an Egyptian Contractor for nearly Rs. 2.40 crores for removal of rubbish at Port Suez through fake bills;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether involvement of S.C.I, official has been detected in this case and if so, who are the officials involved; and

(d) what action Government have taken to recover the amount and also against the officials found involved in this case?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T. G. VENKAT-RAMAN): (a) and (b) Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) has reported that it has suffered a loss of about Rs. 2.40 crores for payments made by their Port Said agents to an Egyptian contractor for removal of rubbish from SCI's vessel transiting through Suez Canal. The contractor had been submitting forged 'Work Done' Certificates.

(c) and (d) The matter is being investigated by SCI/Ministry of Surface Transport and no conclusion has yet been reached.

Meanwhile, SCI is contemplating to take legal action against their agents in Egypt, for recovering this money.

Container capacity at .lawaharlal Port Trust, Mumbai

903. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to increase the container capacity of ports with construction of two berth container terminals on BOT basis at Jawaharlal Port Trust, Mumbai through private investment;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal formulated/finalised with features thereof; and

(c) what is the present status of the proposal and the details of private sector offers of investment received for participation in the project and decision taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T. G. VENKAT-RAMAN): (a) Yes, Sir.